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after reports are received from
IAC Agencies and DCI.*

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27 March 1950

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: Policy concerning the CIA Weekly Summary

1. The Assistant Director for Reports and Estimates has requested clarification of the policy governing the production and dissemination of the CIA Weekly Summary. COAPS has studied the matter with ORE and the result is presented for your decision in the conclusions and recommendation herein.

2. The CIA Weekly Summary is a brief presentation of the most significant developments of the week, adapted to the use of top-level policy officials who do not have the time or any reason to go into the world situation in detail. The items included each week are selected with a view to presenting those having the greatest impact on U. S. national security and our objectives abroad. An effort is made to provide insight behind the facts in each case and to estimate future developments where possible.

3. The Summary has been developed through experience to its present stature and, with one exception, is believed to be well suited to fulfill its purpose. The exception derives from its Secret classification, which is not sufficiently high to permit full treatment of all items which should be selected in line with the descriptive statement in Paragraph 2. It is often necessary completely to omit items which cannot editorially be sufficiently declassified for inclusion while retaining the bulk of their

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meaning. In other cases, items must be distorted or incompletely reported through editorial declassification. The result is that the Summary is reduced in value and may sometimes lead to dangerous misconceptions due to the de-emphasis or omission of the most critical items, these being the items that are most often classified Top Secret.

4. As to the breadth of dissemination of the Summary, the individuals seeing it should be limited to those top-level policy officials for whom it is intended, with sufficient additional distribution to include those who assist them directly in the formulation of high policy. The formulation of policy often works upward, hence it is just as important that appropriate assistants receive adequate intelligence guidance as it is for their superiors to receive it. Under this concept, it would appear logical for the Army, for example, to receive fifteen to twenty copies, but distribution should be confined to the Offices of the Secretary and the Chief of Staff. (Note: The Office of the Chief of Staff includes the General Staff.) Thus, in the end, the basic criterion as to whether any given individual should be able to see the Summary should be the level of the office where he is employed and the degree to which that office participates in the formulation of national security policy rather than his personal rank.

5. No clear statement of policy concerning the Summary has ever been furnished the agencies receiving the publication, nor is any such policy available within CIA for use in the consideration of requests for additional

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copies. As the result, the distribution is now somewhat haphazard and there is a question as to whether the Summary is reaching the right individuals, even though in some respects the distribution list is perhaps too broad. Even if the distribution list were revised now, it is unlikely that it would remain consistent and homogenous over a period of time. It is, therefore, believed advisable both to enunciate a policy and to provide for a periodic review of the distribution list. The necessity for such action would be emphasized by a decision to raise the classification of the Summary to Top Secret in accordance with the reasoning in Paragraph 3 above. Furthermore, the consistency of adherence by CIA to the enunciated policy for dissemination must be ensured by leaving decisions in the matter in the hands of the Director.

6. Conclusions: In order to clarify the status of the CIA Weekly Summary and to ensure adequate handling of the publication from a security aspect:

a. The description of the Weekly Summary given in Paragraph 2, above, should be confirmed as permanent Agency policy;

b. The concept expressed in Paragraph 4, above, should be approved as ^{usual} permanent Agency policy for the distribution of the Summary:

c. The classification of the CIA Weekly Summary should be raised to Top Secret;

d. The distribution list should be reviewed annually, and as necessary revised, action to be completed by 1 July;

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e. The annual review should be carried out by COAPS in consultation with ORE, OCD, and I&S, the result being submitted to the Director for his approval;

f. On the occasion of each annual review the CIA policy regarding the Weekly Summary should be repeated to the recipient departments and agencies;

g. The first such review should be undertaken immediately upon the approval of the conclusions and recommendations herein;

h. Any interim requests for additional copies of the Summary should be referred to COAPS for the formulation of a coordinated recommendation to the Director.

7. Recommendation: It is recommended that you approve the above conclusions and direct their implementation. The AD/ORE, the AD/OCD, and the Chief, I&SS concur in this recommendation.

8. Upon your approval of the above recommendation, COAPS will notify all concerned in CIA, and will proceed with the first annual review of the distribution of the Summary.